

PASSAGE 3

Read the following editorial about text messaging and teenagers. Then answer questions 20–29.

Editorial: Teens are going to extremes with texting

from *The Jersey Journal*

The national obsession with instantaneous communication is taking a toll on teens so severe that some experts are calling it a crisis.

It's not the phenomenon of cell-phoning or messaging while driving—both are illegal in New Jersey—but all-night texting that is leaving too many teens too tired for school.

- 3 One 14-year-old New Jerseyan featured in a recent *Star-Ledger* story receives up to 10,000—10,000!—text messages a month. To accomplish that astounding yet not unusual feat, daily activities like bathing and sleeping are interrupted, thumbs pumping, to read and respond to an avalanche of messages. Doctors are beginning to recognize such obsession as addiction that is robbing children of sleep at the very time in their lives when they need it the most.

A well-publicized study recently found that early high school start times deprive adolescents of sleep and force students to perform academically in the early morning, a time of day when they are at their worst. Many teens are making a tough situation worse by shortchanging themselves of the time they do have to sleep. The inevitable results are poor performance, a sort of sleepwalking through classes and the day in a “fog.”

According to a recent Nielsen study, 13- to 17-year-olds send or receive an average of 1,742 text messages a month—more than seven times the average number of calls they place on their cell phones. That represents huge chunks of time dedicated to the flimsiest of patter. Here, truly, the medium is the message, and teens are loath to part with a gadget which to them seems as natural as breathing.

It's a situation made all the more challenging by the fact that these kids are among the first to have this amazing, and tempting, technology right at their fingertips; it's not likely they will set limits for themselves. They depend on their parents for rules and guidelines in all other areas of life, so it's unlikely they will cut down on texting without some intervention.

A great many adults also are addicted to devices of the new technology. In fact, there's a “Distracted Driving Summit” taking place in Washington, D.C., in which federal officials are urging the public not to text and drive in those states that haven't outlawed it. And a rehab center for the technologically dependent just opened in Washington State. For \$14,000, clients are helped to wean themselves from obsessive use of video games, texting, Facebook, eBay and Twitter.

There are strategies and experts galore to consult, but parents have it in their power to help their kids immediately by setting limits on their use of all these gadgets by just taking them away at bedtime or simply not paying the bills.

Here's another approach, employing an increasingly quaint mode of communication: Sit down and talk with them about the risks they are taking with their health.

20. Read paragraph 3.

How does the first sentence in paragraph 3 connect to the other details provided in the paragraph?

- A. The author provides a fact that supports the ideas in the rest of the paragraph.
- B. The author provides a fact that contradicts the information provided in the rest of the paragraph.
- C. The author provides an opinion and then in the rest of the paragraph supports it with facts and evidence collected from other sources.
- D. The author provides an opinion and then in the rest of the paragraph gives several suggestions and tips to support the ideas presented.

21. Read the sentence from the editorial.

"The inevitable results are poor performance, a sort of sleepwalking through classes and the day in a 'fog.'"

What is the meaning of the word inevitable?

- A. hidden
- B. conflicting
- C. certain
- D. ongoing

22. Why does the author include information about the average number of texts sent or received by teens each month?

- A. The author wishes to show how much time teens spend texting each other outside of school.
- B. The author wants to show the dangers of teens spending more time than the average engaged in texting.
- C. The author believes that the average number of texts is too large and would like to propose a smaller number be set as a monthly limit.
- D. The author wants to describe normal behavior and compare it with other information to demonstrate what the extreme would be.

23. Read the sentence from the editorial.

“That represents huge chunks of time dedicated to the flimsiest of patter.”

What meaning does the author intend to convey with the words “flimsiest of patter”?

- A. The texts are often not easy to understand.
- B. The texts are not part of meaningful conversation.
- C. It takes too much time to read and write texts.
- D. It takes great dedication to respond to every text message.

24. Which word could best replace quaint in the last paragraph of the editorial?

- A. old-fashioned
- B. ill-suited
- C. strange
- D. traditional

25. Which statement from the editorial best represents the argument the author is trying to make?

- A. "It's not the phenomenon of cell-phoning or messaging while driving—both are illegal in New Jersey . . ."
- B. "' . . . many adults also are addicted to devices of the new technology."
- C. "' . . . there's a 'Distracted Driving Summit' taking place in Washington, D.C., in which federal officials are urging the public not to text and drive . . ."
- D. "' . . . parents have it in their power to help their kids immediately by setting limits on their use of all these gadgets . . ."

26. Which statement best describes the author's point of view in the editorial?

- A. The author feels that teenagers must teach themselves how to limit their use of technology.
- B. The author believes that teens should make sure that homework is the main reason for using technology.
- C. The author feels that families must stop allowing teens to have unlimited access to technology.
- D. The author believes that teens should be more responsible and pay for their own technology.

27. Which sentence best states the central idea of the editorial?

- A. Teens should be carefully monitored by their families to be sure they spend more time on their homework than on texting.
- B. Teens are creating long-term problems for themselves by reading and sending text messages when they should be resting.
- C. Teens have too much access to technology and need to start focusing on schoolwork instead of on texting.
- D. Teens have not learned to communicate in person, but it appears that they are better writers now that text messaging is available.

28. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Which sentence best states the author's main argument?

- A. Teens are compromising their health and wellness by texting day and night.
- B. Schools should look for ways to start the school day later and allow teens to sleep longer.
- C. Many teens need to be seen by a doctor for the symptoms that arise due to texting.
- D. Schools should provide teens with information related to reasons for getting enough sleep.

Part Two

Which sentences from the editorial support the answer in Part One? Choose two answers.

- A. "Doctors are beginning to recognize such obsession as addiction that is robbing children of sleep at the very time in their lives when they need it the most."
- B. "Many teens are making a tough situation worse by shortchanging themselves of the time they do have to sleep."
- C. "Here, truly, the medium is the message, and teens are loath to part with a gadget which to them seems as natural as breathing."
- D. "They depend on their parents for rules and guidelines in all other areas of life, so it's unlikely they will cut down on texting without some intervention."

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS QUESTION**E08.E.1.1**

29. The editorial focuses on teen use of text messaging. Write an essay analyzing how the author develops the main argument in the editorial. Use evidence from the editorial to support your response.

Writer's Checklist**PLAN before you write**

- Make sure you read the question carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the question relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- ☐ I stayed focused on answering the question.
- ☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

1. The first step in the process of the scientific method is to ask a question. This question should be based on an observation or a problem that needs to be solved. For example, a scientist might observe that a plant grows faster in one location than another and ask, "What factors affect plant growth?"


2. The second step is to form a hypothesis, which is a tentative answer to the question. This hypothesis should be based on prior knowledge and can be tested. For example, the scientist might hypothesize, "If a plant receives more sunlight, then it will grow faster."

3. The third step is to design an experiment to test the hypothesis. This involves identifying the variables that will be manipulated and measured. In the example, the independent variable would be the amount of sunlight, and the dependent variable would be the rate of plant growth.

4. The fourth step is to conduct the experiment and collect data. This involves carefully controlling the conditions and recording the results. For example, the scientist might grow two identical plants, one in a sunny location and one in a shaded location, and measure their growth over a period of weeks.

5. The fifth step is to analyze the data and draw a conclusion. This involves comparing the results to the hypothesis and determining whether the hypothesis is supported or refuted. In the example, if the plant in the sunny location grew faster, the hypothesis would be supported.

6. The final step is to communicate the results of the experiment. This can be done through a written report, a presentation, or a publication. This step is important because it allows other scientists to review the work and build on it.

GO ON 

PSSA Grade 8 ELA Preliminary Item and Scoring Sampler—August 2014

AFTER YOU HAVE CHECKED YOUR WORK, CLOSE YOUR ANSWER
BOOKLET AND TEST BOOKLET SO YOUR TEACHER WILL KNOW
YOU ARE FINISHED.

